

Message Text

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60

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 FAA-00 /068 W

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R 151650Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0991

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REFS: OSLO 0142, 75 OSLO 4777, OSLO 0226, OSLO 0156

1. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN, FONMIN POLAR ADVISOR, INFORMED EMBOFF THAT A MEMBER OF NORWEGIAN PRESS CALLED HIM RECENTLY TO ASK ABOUT US DRIFT STATION PROJECT NEAR SVALBARD. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN BELIEVES NEWSMAN MAY HAVE LEARNED ABOUT PROJECT FROM STORTINGSMAN, AS PARLIAMENT'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WAS BRIEFED ON GENERAL OUTLINE OF PROPOSED PROJECT IN CONNECTION WITH STORTING DEBATE IN DECEMBER.

2. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN URGED NEWSMAN TO HOLD STORY UNTIL PROJECT IS APPROVED AND READY TO BE ANNOUNCED PUBLICALLY. EMBASSY'S IMPRESSION IS THAT PORJECT WAS TO BE REVIEWED INTERNALLY FOR APPROVAL NEXT MONTH WITH FUNDING DECIDION TO BE SOON AFTER, AND WE AGREED WITH BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN THAT UNTIL THOSE DECISIONS ARE MADE THE LESS SAID IN PRESS ABOUT THE PROJECT THE BETTER. HE STATED, HOWEVER, HE DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG THE JOURNALIST WOULD BE WILLING WAIT BEFORE WRITING SOMETHING ABOUT IT AND HE AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF PRESS WROTE ABOUT PROJECT AND IT WAS LATER DISAPPROVED.

3. PROVIDING DETAILS OF PROJECT CAN BE WORKED OUT SATISFACTORILY TO ALL PARTIES, AND THAT OF COURSE INVOLVES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NORWEGIAN POLAR INSTITUTE, NORWEGIANS WOULD LIKE

SEE PROJECT UNDERTAKEN. IT WOULD PROVIDE YEAR-ROUND PRESENCE OF ANOTHER WESTERN NATION IN THE AREA TO HELP COUNTERBALANCE SOVIET ACTIVITY, WOULD EVIDENCE US INTEREST AND WOULD ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH THERE.

4. WHILE EMBASSY RECOGNIZES PROJECT CONSIDERATION HAS ITS OWN TIMETABLE, WE WISH CALL PRESS INTEREST AND POSSIBLE PUBLICITY TO PROJECT DIRECTOR'S ATTENTION AND URGE THAT WE BE INFORMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OF PROJECT STATUS AS REQUESTED OSLO 0142 AND AT APPROPRIATE TIME BE GIVEN APPROPRIATE DETAILS WHICH MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE PUBLICLY.
BYRNE

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Authority: morefirh
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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